Session Description

Understanding each other's talents is our best opportunity for team success. When team members are aware of each other's talent and strengths, they have an understanding of how each person is inclined to think, act and feel. This awareness helps the team mitigate conflict and avoid dysfunction.

This workshop is designed to explore key concepts in effective communication around teams, filtered through a strengths-based approach. A team's ability to achieve excellence and get the most out of the natural talents of each team member is connected to the extent that the team understands, appreciates, and starts to use this information in a meaningful way.

Learning Objectives

Participants in the Virtual Happy Hour (VHH) will be able to:

- identify the characteristics of effective and ineffective teams

- examine the motivations and roles of team members through strengths

- consider expectations placed on teams and obstacles to effective communication within teams

- identify and practice the skills that support members of a team to work together successfully

our deepest fear

BY MARIANNE WILLIAMSON

Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate.
Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure.
It is our light, not our darkness
That most frightens us.

We ask ourselves
Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous?
Actually, who are you *not* to be?

. . . as we let our own light shine,
We unconsciously give other people permission to do the same.
As we're liberated from our own fear,
Our presence automatically liberates others.

NAVIGATING CONFLICT THROUGH
Communication
UNDERSTANDING COMMUNITY
& TEAM DYNAMICS

SHIFT FROM:

- Deficit-based thinking
- Individual focus
- Critiquing from the sidelines
- Obsession with productivity

SHIFT TOWARD:

- Strengths-based thinking
- Collective action
- Leading from the center
- Whole people/whole movements

CULTURE SHIFT OF LEADERSHIP

adapted from Catalyst Project (http://collectiveliberation.org/culture-shifts-2/)

STRENGTHS–BASED DEVELOPMENT AND ITS ASSUMPTIONS

- Only some behaviors can be learned.

- The best in a role deliver the same outcomes using different behaviors.

- Weakness-fixing can minimize failures; strengths-building leads to success.

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STANDARD DEFINITION OF A *TEAM*

A group of people with different skills and different tasks, who work together on a common project, service, or goal, with a meshing of functions and mutual support.

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ATTRIBUTES OF AN *INEFFECTIVE* TEAM

- Toxic sub-groups

- Unequal participation or uneven use of group resources

- Rigid or dysfunctional group norms and procedures

- A climate of blame, defensiveness or fear

- Uncreative alternatives to problems

- Restricted, poor quality or non-existent communication

- Avoidance of differences or potential conflicts

Navigating Conflict Through
Communication
UNDERSTANDING COMMUNITY
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CULTURE SHIFT OF *TEAMS*

Teams can look very different:

DEPENDENT
A dependent team is composed of a collection of individuals who have their own roles and work under close supervision of a manager/leader.

INDEPENDENT
Team members work on their own tasks with less guidance from a manager/leader.

INTERDEPENDENT
Members of an interdependent team rely on each other to get work done. They focus on each person's strengths and manage around their weaknesses.

ANATOMY OF A STRENGTHS–BASED TEAM

A strengths-based team is a group of imperfect but talented contributors who are valued for their strengths and who need one another to realize individual and team excellence.

These teams:

- Understand their individual talents and strengths.

- See the links between their strengths and success-both past and present.

- Leverage their talents and strengths toward action.

- Encourage partnerships that cultivate each other's strengths development.

STRENGTHS–BASED
TEAM

FOCUSING ON
TALENTS & STRENGTHS

- Confidence
- Engagement in work
- Productivity
- Individual growth
- Career satisfaction
- Staff retention
- Organizational growth

Navigating Conflict Through
Communication
UNDERSTANDING COMMUNITY
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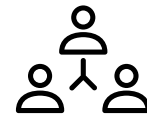# WHAT ARE STRENGTHS?

A strength is composed of:

TALENTS
how we naturally think,
feel, and behave.

KNOWLEDGE
what you know, does
not naturally exist.

SKILLS
abilities, do not
naturally exist within
us that we nurture.

TALENT X (KNOWLEDGE + SKILL) = STRENGTH

DOMAINS OF STRENTHS/TALENTS

EXECUTING	INFLUENCING	RELATIONSHIP BUILDING	STRATEGIC THINKING
People with dominant Executing themes know how to make things happen.	People with dominant Influencing themes know how to take charge, speak up, and make sure the team is heard.	People with dominant Relationship Building themes have the ability to build strong relationships that can hold a team together and make the team greater than the sum of its parts.	People with dominant Strategic Thinking themes help teams consider what could be. They absorb and analyze information that can inform better decisions.
Achiever **Arranger** **Belief** **Consistency** **Deliberative** **Discipline** **Focus** **Responsibility** **Restorative**	**Activator** **Command** **Communication** **Competition** **Maximizer** **Self-Assurance** **Significance** **Woo**	**Adaptability** **Connectedness** **Developer** **Empathy** **Harmony** **Includer** **Individualization** **Positivity** **Relator**	**Analytical** **Context** **Futuristic** **Ideation** **Input** **Intellection** **Learner** **Strategic**

A lack of investment in a team's talents and strengths cause conflict and a breakdown in communication.

Our talents and strengths create FILTERS – a characteristic way of responding to the world around them.

CONFLICT,
COMMUNICATION,
AND
STRENGTHS–BASED
TEAMS

NAVIGATING CONFLICT THROUGH
Communication
UNDERSTANDING COMMUNITY
& TEAM DYNAMICS

How do our talent and strength filters affect how we communicate in teams?

- Filters explain our innate motivations.

- Filters explain how we think, weigh alternatives, and arrive at our decisions.

- Filters explain whom we trust, with whom we build relationships with, whom we ignore, and who we will confront.

Navigating Conflict Through
Communication
UNDERSTANDING COMMUNITY & TEAM DYNAMICS

CONFLICT, COMMUNICATION, AND STRENGTHS-BASED TEAMS

NAVIGATING CONFLICT THROUGH
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REFLECTION *&* DISCUSSION

THINK ABOUT A SPECIFIC TEAM YOU IN WHICH YOU ARE A MEMBER:

Using three short phrases, how might other people in the organization describe this team?

What performance challenge is the team currently focused on?

Of all the things this team does well, which two or three does this team do best?

What frustrates you about this team?

What do you contribute to the team that lights you up or gets you excited?

NAVIGATING CONFLICT THROUGH
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- A team's success ultimately depends on performance.

- Individual team talents/strengths should be aimed at specific common goals.

- Individual team members' talents have to be intentionally nurtured into strengths.

- Appreciating strengths leads to higher engagement, which minimizes impractical conflict and communication breakdown.

- Recognizing and celebrating strengths aids in creating a strengths-based culture.

PRACTICAL

APPLICATION

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